

REMARKS

This Amendment is being filed in response to the Office Action mailed December 21, 2007, which has been reviewed and carefully considered. Reconsideration and allowance of the present application in view of the amendments made above and the remarks to follow are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-4 and 7-15 remain in this application, where claims 5-6 have been canceled without prejudice, and claims 11-15 have been added by the present amendment.

By means of the present amendment, the current Abstract has been deleted and substituted with the enclosed New Abstract which better conforms to U.S. practice.

By means of the present amendment, claims 1-4 and 7-10 have been amended for non-statutory reasons, such as beginning the dependent claims with 'The' instead of 'A', changing "characterized in that" to --wherein--, and deleting reference numerals typically used in European practice that are known to not limit the scope of the claims. Such amendments to claims 1-4 and 7-10 were not made in order to address issues of patentability and Applicant

respectfully reserves all rights under the Doctrine of Equivalents.

In the Office Action, the Examiner indicated that claims 6-8 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicant gratefully acknowledges the indication that claims 6-8 contain patentable subject matter. By means of the present amendment, independent claims 1 and 10 have been amended to include the features of allowable claim 6 which has been canceled without prejudice. In addition, claims 7-8 have been rewritten in independent form. Further, new independent claims 14-15 includes features similar to allowable claims 7-8, and thus should also be allowable.

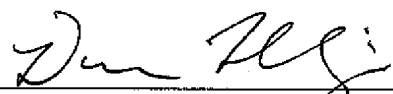
Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that independent claims 1, 7-8, 10 and 14-15 be allowed. In addition, it is respectfully submitted that claims 2-4, 9 and 11-13 should also be allowed at least based on their dependence from independent claims 1 and 10, as well as their individually patentable elements.

In addition, Applicant denies any statement, position or averment of the Examiner that is not specifically addressed by the foregoing argument and response. Any rejections and/or points of argument not addressed would appear to be moot in view of the

presented remarks. However, the Applicant reserves the right to submit further arguments in support of the above stated position, should that become necessary. No arguments are waived and none of the Examiner's statements are conceded.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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